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FINAL RECORD OF THE SIX HUNDRED AND FORTY-FIFTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 4 March 1993, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Christo Halatchev (Bulgaria)

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The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 645th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

At the outset, I wish to welcome warmly, on behalf of the Conference and on my own behalf, two distinguished visitors who will participate in our plenary meeting today. The Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia, Her Excellency Wilma Zafra, represents a non-member participating in the work of the Conference, which has recently expressed interest in becoming a new member. This is the first visit of the Vice-Minister to the Conference and I wish her every success in her mission in Geneva. His Excellency the Director of the Department of Security Policy and Cooperation in Europe of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Hungary, Ambassador István Gyarmati, will be addressing the Conference as the first speaker. His presence here reflects the active role of Hungary in our work. Ambassador Gyarmati is involved in important multilateral negotiations and I am happy to see him in our midst. I am sure that the members of the Conference will follow the statements of our visitors with particular interest.

On my list of speakers for today are the representatives of Hungary, Japan, the United States of America, China, Ireland and Colombia. I now give the floor to the representative of Hungary, Ambassador Gyarmati.

Mr. GYARMATI (Hungary): Mr. President, the Hungarian delegation has already conveyed its congratulations on the occasion of the Bulgarian presidency, but let me also in my personal capacity reiterate our full support to you in fulfilling this responsible task. I would also like to express my pleasure that after many years of dealing with European security issues - and after having been one of the lucky authors of important arms control treaties - I have the honour to address the single multilateral disarmament negotiating body of the international community.

With the end of the cold war and the disappearance of the dominantly bipolar character of world affairs multilateral diplomacy has entered a new era. Some have already started to bury arms control, suggesting that it has lost its importance. I am convinced that - maybe unfortunately - the coming years will prove they were wrong. For multilateral disarmament this means a pressing need to apply fresh thinking and new approaches in facing old and especially newly emerging challenges to international peace, stability and security. It is a welcome fact that the multilateral disarmament machinery, including first of all the Conference on Disarmament, is trying to adapt itself to the realities. The two documents recently adopted by the Conference which are to be transferred to the resumed session of the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly testify to this.

The proliferation of arms, especially that of weapons of mass destruction, has been a major security concern in past decades. A number of international agreements -

both global and regional - have been elaborated and are being implemented, all addressing a particular aspect of proliferation. The most specific and perhaps the most important element of this network of legal instruments is the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

(Mr. Gyarmati, Hungary)

At the same time non-proliferation efforts are not - and should not be -limited to the nuclear field. The biological and toxin weapons Convention and the recently concluded chemical weapons Convention - one of the greatest successes in arms control ever - are also relevant to the issue of non-proliferation.

The concept of curbing proliferation has evolved during the decades. In the past, non-proliferation was largely synonymous with the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. In fact, proliferation concerns were mainly confined to the danger of the spread of nuclear weapons. Later, this term was applied also to chemical and biological weapons and subsequently to the delivery systems of weapons of mass destruction. Today, in our view, non-proliferation efforts are - and must be - related to excessive and destabilizing conventional arms build-ups as well. The development of the concept and the relevant measures countering proliferation have been a result of the direct threats posed by the spread of different types of weapons. The increasing importance of the issue was accompanied by the emergence of new facets of proliferation, such as the potential consequences, stemming from the dissolution of the former Soviet Union or the revelations about Iraq's clandestine nuclear programme. These new threats made many people think about the past as the era of stability, thus less dangerous than today. I want to reject these views in the name of those nations which paid a very high price for that stability.

But the time has indeed come to raise international non-proliferation efforts to a level of new quality. One direction should be the strengthening of existing global norms by achieving their true universality and by enhanced verification. At the same time, the enforcement of these global norms is also gathering significance. We believe that the responsibility of the United Nations Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security calls for its more active and widespread involvement in this field.

It is undeniable that the issue of non-proliferation can best be addressed in a multilateral framework. Obviously, questions related to weapons of mass destruction have a dimension extending far beyond countries or regions directly involved and have a significant bearing on global security. The recognition of this element is reflected by the fact that the effective implementation of regional non-proliferation arrangements also requires the contribution of nuclear Powers.

Reflecting the general approach of my Government, the Hungarian delegation in a recent statement emphasized the prevention of armed conflicts as a priority of the security agenda. It was also stated that this could be done through the application of the many tools of preventive international diplomacy. These tools

certainly must include international efforts to curb the proliferation of weapons. I would like to acquaint the Conference on Disarmament with the Hungarian policy in this regard. In doing so, my delegation intends to contribute to the important informal consultations on non-proliferation in all its aspects.

(Mr. Gyarmati, Hungary)

Questions of non-proliferation have become a major focus in the arms control and disarmament policy of the Republic of Hungary, a country that does not possess and has no intention whatsoever to possess any type of weapons of mass destruction. Apart from our traditionally firm support and commitment to the principles of non-proliferation, this was also due to the fact that proliferation concerns have moved up on the agenda of European cooperation. Affected by a fragile security environment, we deem it indispensable that the authority of relevant international agreements be strengthened by developing a stronger international consensus. In this regard, we consider it a must that all new States integrated now into the CSCE process adhere to these pillars of international and European security.

We are also of the view that international consultative mechanisms aimed at preventing the diversion of dual-use materials, equipment and technologies relating to the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems still have an important role to play. We support and are ready to contribute to the activities of the respective international consultative mechanisms. Our cooperation with them has helped us a great deal in shaping Hungarian non-proliferation policy. Having in mind the challenges we face, we attach particular significance to the Missile Technology Control Regime, which we hope to be able to join in the near future.

Touching upon some of the particular subjects of non-proliferation, we consider the nuclear component as of primordial importance. The role of the NPT as a cornerstone of international peace and security was further emphasized in 1992 when a number of States, including two nuclear Powers, decided to accede to this legal instrument. It is of particular significance that all permanent members of the United Nations Security Council are States parties to the NPT now. This fact is undoubtedly going to have a beneficial effect on efforts aimed at strengthening the NPT regime and ensuring its full-scale implementation.

Though the welcome increase in the number of States parties to the NPT and the milestone agreements reached in the field of nuclear disarmament have contributed to the improvement of the political environment surrounding the NPT, we cannot yet lean back and relax. The extension and review Conference of the NPT, due in 1995, will raise a whole series of challenges the international community has to live up to. In this context, we strongly believe that the highest priority already during the preparatory phases of the Conference should be assigned to the indefinite extension of the duration of the Treaty. Both this goal and the global acceptance and authority of the NPT can best be served by the

further development of verification means available for IAEA and by the appropriate implementation of article VI of the Treaty. In addition to the sweeping cuts in the nuclear arsenals of the two major Powers - and at a next stage of all nuclear-weapon States - the NPT regime would also benefit from real progress in the fields of comprehensive prohibition of nuclear testing, the provision of security guarantees to non-nuclear-weapon States and the prohibition of attacks against nuclear facilities. This latter issue does not currently appear amongst the

(Mr. Gyarmati, Hungary)

priorities of the Conference on Disarmament for the 1993 session, yet we continue to consider it highly relevant to our - and others' - national security, taking also into account some specific regional concerns.

Speaking about nuclear non-proliferation one cannot but repeatedly highlight the responsibility of nuclear suppliers. The application of full-scope safeguards provisions should be a precondition of any nuclear supply. Guided by the desire to strengthen the non-proliferation regime, Hungary's nuclear export policy has always ensured full implementation of these recommendations.

Preventing the spread of chemical weapons is hardly a less compelling task. The recently concluded chemical weapons Convention can be termed as the most serious attempt to curb proliferation by effectively eliminating a whole category of weapons of mass destruction. The very fact that almost 140 States have already signed the Convention demonstrates its global character, a desirable objective of any meaningful effort in the field of non-proliferation as well. This multilateral disarmament agreement is also unique in the sense that it contains explicit provisions which are aimed at preventing proliferation in the interim period leading to a world free from chemical weapons. These provisions clearly set out the conditions under which States parties can transfer certain chemicals to other States. Hungary is already in the process of adjusting its existing regulations to meet the relevant provisions of the CWC.

The biological and toxin weapons Convention also contains appropriate provisions similarly aiming to prevent the proliferation of this weapon of mass destruction. Although the Convention still lacks an adequate verification regime, States parties have introduced and recently up-dated a number of confidence-building measures all aimed at strengthening the authority of this legal instrument and enhancing confidence in the implementation of its provisions. An Ad Hoc Group of Governmental Experts is currently examining potential verification measures of the BWC from a scientific and technical standpoint. Hungary, not only as a country honoured to chair the Ad Hoc Group but also as a State party interested in strengthening the BWC through an effective and workable verification regime, attaches great significance to the work of the Group. Any progress made in this area will undoubtedly contribute to international non-proliferation efforts.

Along with the priority given to weapons of mass destruction, Hungary attaches the greatest importance to the issues of controlling conventional weapons. Current events in different parts of the world, including unfortunately Europe, provide once again clear evidence of the consequences of unconstrained, excessive build-ups of conventional weapons. While recognizing the inherent right of all States to self-defence as embodied in Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, it should be admitted that the excessive accumulation of conventional arms may create grave situations like the one in the Gulf region and elsewhere. Such arms build-ups are fuelled, inter alia, by misperceptions and suspicion resulting from the lack of information on arms acquisition as well as by uncontrolled arms transfers.

(Mr. Gyarmati, Hungary)

Hungary is therefore firmly convinced that this situation can be rectified and the best way to do so is in the framework of the United Nations. Accordingly, Hungary fully endorsed the resolution of the United Nations General Assembly which requested the Secretary-General to establish and maintain a universal and non-discriminatory register of conventional arms that includes data on international arms transfers as well as other information on military holdings and procurement through national production and relevant policies. Hungary is ready to furnish the requested data and give complete background information for the first registration which is to take place by 30 April 1993. Hungary is also ready to consider and then take further steps on this road.

The ideas I have set forth reflect the genuine commitment of Hungary to the cause of non-proliferation. In this spirit I would like to pledge once again the full support of the Hungarian delegation to the on-going efforts in the framework of the Conference on Disarmament.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Hungary for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to me. I now give the floor to the representative of Japan, Ambassador Tanaka.

Mr. TANAKA (Japan): Mr. President, permit me at the outset to congratulate you on the assumption of your country to the presidency of the Conference. I wish you every success in the fulfilment of your responsibilities, and assure you of my delegation's full cooperation toward that end. I would also like to express my gratitude to our previous President, Ambassador Amorim of Brazil, whose skilful leadership contributed greatly to the smooth commencement of our work this year.

Today, I would like to address briefly the issue of transparency in armaments, in particular the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. Last week we heard the interesting speech on this issue by Ambassador Wagenmakers of the Netherlands in which he stressed the importance of gaining the widest possible participation in the Register. He thus appealed to all CD members and observers to provide data and information in accordance with the relevant General Assembly resolutions. My delegation wishes to echo his

appeal for the submission of data and information for the first phase of the registration process. Having been involved, from the very start, in the establishment of the Register, Japan strongly supports its primary objective, which is to build confidence among States. Japan will certainly submit its data in a timely manner, and fervently hopes that as many States as possible, especially CD members, will do likewise. I believe that achieving the widest possible participation will add momentum to the process already initiated by the General Assembly and that the Register will serve as a foundation for our further collective endeavours to increase openness and transparency in armaments.

Japan holds the view that regional initiatives have a useful role to play in facilitating the national input of data in the Register. As a matter of fact, in January this year Japan had the privilege to host, together with the Office for Disarmament Affairs of the United Nations, a "Regional Workshop on

(Mr. Tanaka, Japan)

the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms for the Asia-Oceania Region" in Tokyo in an effort to deepen understanding and to enhance the process of achieving greater transparency in armaments throughout the region. This was the second workshop held in Japan on this subject. A report on the Tokyo workshop of last year has, I believe, been circulated by my delegation to CD members and observers.

I am aware of the dissatisfaction of many States with the present relatively simple Register system, but I have to point out that, as envisaged by General Assembly resolution 46/36L, the system is but one element in a stage-by-stage process toward our ultimate goal. The process is still in its early stage and it is the hope of my delegation that the momentum achieved so far will be maintained.

My delegation, like many others, is pleased to see that an early decision was made on the establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on TIA. We hope that the Committee will commence its work without delay and that it will submit a truly substantive report to the United Nations. The international community has entrusted us with the task of addressing a wide range of issues concerning openness and transparency in armaments. My delegation, for its part, places particular importance on the complex issue of the excessive accumulation of arms, including military holdings and procurement through national production. This is an issue which has important implications for regional stability and is one which the General Assembly has requested the Conference to address as soon as possible. Indeed, it is one of the key issues that the group of governmental experts will work on when it is established early next year under the auspices of the United Nations Secretary-General.

As Ambassador Wagenmakers so convincingly argued, it is an area in which we can expect to achieve tangible results in a relatively short time-frame, depending, of course, upon the contributions we make to the work of the 1994 expert group.

Last year, at the informal meetings on questions relating to weapons of mass destruction and transfer of advanced technology with military applications, we heard a wide range of opinions and concerns. Indeed, these are very complicated issues, since they involve strategic, technical and political questions, and sometimes touch upon quite sensitive areas affecting national security and economic interests. For this reason, my delegation believes that further in-depth study and exchanges of views are needed in order to find practical ways and means to increase openness and transparency of activities in these areas. My delegation is ready to participate constructively in the deliberations of the Ad Hoc Committee that has been established to address these subjects.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Japan for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of the United States of America, Ambassador Ledogar.

Mr. LEDOGAR (United States of America): Mr. President, first of all, I would like to congratulate you upon your assumption of the Chair and offer your delegation the full support of my delegation as Bulgaria carries out the important duties of the presidency. I also express my thanks to Ambassador Amorim for his skill in guiding the CD especially in leading us to consensus on the reports to the United Nations First Committee Chairman on the occasion of the resumed session.

Today I too will address the United Nations Register on conventional arms. Our colleague from the Netherlands spoke on the same topic last week, and we just heard today Ambassador Gyarmati of Hungary and Ambassador Tanaka of Japan also speak on the topic of the United Nations Register. I congratulate them both on their timely and thoughtful interventions.

As my colleagues noted, a little over a year ago the United Nations agreed to the concept of a Register of Conventional Arms. United Nations resolution 46/36L was adopted without a dissenting vote. The Register was further elaborated by the United Nations Secretary-General in his 1992 report entitled "Report on the Register of Conventional Arms"; the conclusions of this report were adopted by consensus last fall.

I believe all Governments represented around this table attach great importance to ensuring that the Register is a successful endeavour. The deadline for national submissions, 30 April, is fast approaching. My Government is busily preparing data on conventional imports and exports, along with available background information regarding our military holdings, procurement through national production, and relevant policies.

The United States, along with many others, sees great value in establishing a global confidence-building measure which highlights transparency and openness with regard to conventional arms. Such a global measure can have a positive impact on regional relationships. The Register will enhance confidence, provide stability, help States to exercise restraint, ease tensions, and in the end, strengthen regional and international peace and security.

Ambassador Wagenmakers said last week that "The importance of participation in the Register by as many States as possible cannot be overstated." The United States agrees. The Register will not serve its overall objectives if it turns into an exercise where only a few developed countries participate. The closer we can come to full disclosure by all nations, sharing data on imports and exports of conventional arms in a given year, the greater will be the Register's success.

The United Nations Register is rightly receiving much attention on a regional basis, and the United States compliments this activity. As an example, as was noted by our Japanese colleague, several weeks ago Japan hosted a conference, where the Register was a major topic, attended by several of our colleagues from the CD. In Vienna, the Forum for Security Cooperation has adopted a decision which commits CSCE States to meeting the deadline for

submitting Register data to the United Nations Secretary-General. Moreover, the Forum for Security Cooperation has taken the additional step of agreeing to exchange copies of national submissions among themselves.

At the end of March, Italy, in cooperation with the United Nations, is hosting a conference in Florence where again the United Nations Register and conventional arms are major elements. I understand there may be other important regional activity including conferences to be hosted in Warsaw and Buenos Aires. These are all welcome steps to get the Register up and running. Shouldn't the CD do at least as much as is being done on a regional basis, whether in Vienna, Tokyo, Florence, or elsewhere?

While the CD will be pursuing distinct issues related to transparency in armaments, the United States thinks this Conference could also usefully undertake efforts to give the "New York" track - the Register, a boost. In fact, individually and collectively, members of this Conference should take the lead in promoting the United Nations Register and ensuring its effective operation. But how should the Conference do this? What measures should the CD embark upon with regard to the Register? As a starting-point, I suggest that the CD could do two things. First, the member States could agree collectively that they will provide the Register's requested data and information to the United Nations Secretary-General on time, complying with the Register's 30 April deadline. Second, the CD could agree that we will encourage others to do the same, beginning with non-member participant States of the Conference. As a separate initiative, and noting what our friends in Vienna are doing, I believe that the Conference could also agree that on or about 30 April, when we submit data to the Register we will

also exchange informally, among ourselves, here in Geneva, copies of our national submissions.

Now, how could we, the CD, express the view, in a corporate way, that the Register is important and that all members - and non-member participants - should participate? Maybe the CD could adopt a decision. Alternatively, maybe our President could send a letter to the United Nations Secretary-General to express our views, including what the CD is doing on transparency in armaments and what member States intend also to do in support of the Register. There may be other ideas. My delegation would be interested in hearing the views of others. Whatever the CD decides, however, and regardless of the form of our action, we feel the Conference should do something, and should do it soon.

Mr. President, my delegation encourages you to address this issue, either through Presidential consultations, by working with the group coordinators, or otherwise sounding out delegations. We hope that you might undertake to develop a plan or proposal in a timely way which would show the Conference's willingness to support the Register and ensure its effective operation. I offer the full cooperation of my delegation.

In sum, the Register's deadline is almost upon us. The conference on disarmament, as the sole multilateral global negotiating body on disarmament, should pursue not only its own transparency-in-armaments objectives but also

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take the lead in supporting and promoting the United Nations Register. What better way for this body to show the international community its resolve of openness and transparency in the area of conventional arms?

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the United States of America for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to me. I can assure Ambassador Ledogar that I have noted the suggestion he has just made. I will give it full consideration and discuss it with the incoming President of the Conference. I now give the floor to the representative of China, Ambassador Hou.

Mr. HOU (China) (translated from Chinese): Mr. President, at the outset, may I on behalf of the Chinese delegation congratulate you once again on taking up the CD presidency and thank your predecessor Ambassador Amorim for his contributions? I would also like to take this opportunity to bid farewell and wish every success to Ambassador Moritán of Argentina, Ambassador Králik of Czechoslovakia, Ambassador Wagner of Germany, Ambassador Tóth of Hungary, Ambassador Shah of India, Ambassador Cambiaso of Italy, Ambassador Ogada of Kenya and Ambassador Hyltenius of Sweden, who have just left their posts, and to warmly welcome Ambassador Lanús, Ambassador Hoffmann, Ambassador Boytha, Ambassador Chandra, Ambassador Nanjira and Ambassador Norberg, who have just joined us and with whom I shall expect to enjoy close cooperation.

Against the present complex and volatile international situation, upheavals in international relations keep cropping up, ushering the world into a historic period of major changes. As the international community has finally rid itself of the cold war and military confrontation between the East and the West, bipolarism has ended and various forces have started to undergo disintegration and reintegration, making the world develop towards multipolarization. In the meantime people of the world are aware that the lasting peace and universal security they have longed for have not been automatically bestowed on them despite the end of the cold war. The international situation remains unstable and insecure and various contradictions are intensifying. Ethnic conflicts and territorial disputes as well as racial and religious differences in quite a number of countries and regions have come to the fore, and some have even escalated into armed conflicts and regional warfare. The international economic situation is also deteriorating, marked especially by the widening gap between the North and the South. All these facts testify that peace and development remain the two paramount pending issues for the world today.

In such a situation the international community is calling all the more strongly for the establishment of a peaceful, stable, fair and just new international order, including the establishment of an equal and mutually beneficial new international economic order, based on the principles of mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-aggression and non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, equality and mutual benefit and peaceful coexistence. All countries in the world should be able to participate in international affairs as equal partners of the international community and to seek common development in an international

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environment of lasting peace and security. We are confident that, so long as the people of the world persist in their endeavours, such a new international order will eventually be established.

The relevant resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly emphasize that the effective curbing of the nuclear arms race, the realization of complete nuclear disarmament and the prevention of nuclear war remain a pressing task for the international community and a priority agenda item for the Conference on Disarmament. In recent years some new developments have been witnessed in this respect, like the two START treaties between the United States and the Russian Federation. China welcomes these steps in the right direction and hopes that these treaties can be put into full implementation at an early date in order to reduce the danger of nuclear war. At the same time, the international community has pointed out that the reduction plans involved are preliminary, since even if their implementation is completed according to schedule by the beginning of the next century, these two countries will still possess over 90 per cent of the total nuclear arsenals of the world, sufficient to destroy the globe several times over, not to mention the fact that the modernization of nuclear weapons and the arms race in space remain unchecked. Therefore, the tasks for nuclear disarmament are as strenuous as ever. People of all countries have long aspired

to and made unremitting efforts for the early realization of the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of all nuclear weapons. In this respect, States with the largest nuclear arsenals are bound to bear special responsibility in taking the lead to stop the testing, improvement, production and deployment of nuclear weapons, drastically reduce their nuclear arsenals and check the arms race in outer space, thus making their due contribution to comprehensive nuclear disarmament.

In the cause of nuclear disarmament China has never shirked its due responsibilities, but on the contrary has made its contribution by taking a series of significant initiatives. China consistently pursues an independent foreign policy of peace and has never followed a policy of nuclear deterrence. China possesses of a very limited number of nuclear weapons solely for defensive purposes. This explains why on the first day it came into possession of nuclear weapons, the Chinese Government took the lead in unilaterally undertaking not to be the first to use nuclear weapons at any time and under any circumstances. Such an important commitment is of far-reaching significance. We believe that if all nuclear-weapon States assume the same obligation and conclude an international convention to this effect, it will surely contribute to the prevention of nuclear war and the maintenance of world peace.

China fully understands and supports the call by the numerous non-nuclear-weapon States for the provision of security assurances. Hence the Chinese Government took another significant initiative, in unconditionally undertaking not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States or nuclear-free zones. We believe that if all the nuclear-weapon States did likewise the nuclear non-proliferation regime as well as international peace and security could be greatly strengthened. The Chinese delegation hopes that the Conference will proceed towards early

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agreements in the above important areas. In this context, my delegation will cooperate closely with the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on negative security assurances, the Ambassador of Romania, and with other delegations.

To promote the early realization of the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons, China is in favour of taking appropriate measures and concrete steps. China supports the request by countries concerned for the establishment of nuclear-free zones on the basis of voluntary agreement and holds that all nuclear-weapon States should respect the status of these nuclear-free zones and undertake corresponding obligations towards them. In this respect China has signed and ratified the relevant protocols to the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the Treaty of Rarotonga. China has consistently opposed the proliferation of nuclear weapons and has never assisted other countries in the development of such weapons. In all the past years, China has made its contribution to the

prevention of nuclear proliferation and has acceded to the NPT. In the meantime, as a member State of IAEA, China has actively promoted international cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

China fully understands the strong aspiration of the numerous non-nuclear-weapon States for a ban on nuclear testing and believes that a nuclear test ban, as a specific step in the cause of nuclear disarmament, will have some effect in containing the development of nuclear weapons and must be achieved in the framework of complete nuclear disarmament. From the very beginning China has adopted a highly prudent and restrained attitude towards nuclear testing. We long ago ceased nuclear testing in the atmosphere. We have conducted only a very limited number of tests, the smallest number among the nuclear-weapon States. China has always been in favour of putting the issue of a nuclear test ban on to the agenda of the Conference for intensive and extensive deliberations. China has also constructively supported the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban and actively participated in the work of GSE and GSETT-2. The Chinese delegation appreciates the efforts made by Ambassador Tanaka of Japan, Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban.

The prevention of an arms race in outer space, which is, closely linked to nuclear disarmament, is one of the priority items on the agenda of the Conference and calls for our full attention. China consistently stands for the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of all space weapons. Countries with the strongest space capabilities should immediately stop the development, testing, production and deployment of space weapons and destroy the existing ones. Above all, at a time when the cold war has ended and progress in nuclear disarmament has been achieved, people should seek "star peace" instead of "star wars", and there is hardly any further excuse for the insistent pursuit of such strategically destabilizing programmes as GPS or GPALS. The Chinese delegation has always actively supported the Conference and its Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space in their effort to speed up substantive work. We suggest that apart from discussing CBMs in outer space, the Committee should go a step further and discuss such topics as the prohibition of all types of space weapons,

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including anti-ballistic-missile weapons and anti-satellite weapons, the realization of the non-weaponization of outer space and issues like the banning of the use of force and acts of hostility in outer space. We hope that early headway can be achieved in these areas to conclude international agreements acceptable to all parties. We hope that Ambassador Hoffmann of Germany as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Outer Space will achieve early success.

China joined the consensus last year on the United Nations General Assembly resolution concerning transparency in armaments. We welcome the inclusion of this issue in our agenda and favour the establishment of a relevant ad hoc committee. We appreciate the efforts made by Ambassador Zahran of Egypt and Ambassador Wagenmakers of the Netherlands in promoting consultations in this

area. In order to facilitate deliberations the Chinese delegation will submit to the Conference a document on China's position concerning the issue of transparency in armaments. We are also ready to exchange views in depth on this topic with all other delegations. China attaches importance to the issue of transparency in armaments and addresses it with an earnest and responsible attitude. We believe that the purpose of TIA should be to enhance the peace, security and stability of various countries and regions and the whole world. Appropriate and practical TIA measures should serve to promote international trust, reduce tension and help various countries determine their adequate armament levels. China holds that TIA should be pursued on the basis of the principle of undiminished security for all countries. In accordance with the United Nations Charter, all countries enjoy the right of individual or collective self-defence. TIA measures should in no way compromise the right of self-defence and the legitimate defence capabilities of all countries. Naturally, countries should for their part refrain from seeking armaments in excess of their security requirements.

China is of the view that TIA measures should be appropriate and practical and formulated by all countries through consultations on an equal basis. We also wish to point out that as different countries and regions are subject to diverse political, military and security conditions, the same TIA measures may produce different effects on them. Therefore, it is not advisable to seek artificial uniformity in the implementation of TIA measures. Bilateral and regional measures for exchanges of military information and for TIA should be encouraged.

In the current international situation it has become an even more pressing task for the international community to further promote the disarmament process and enhance international peace and security. The Conference on Disarmament is also faced with new challenges and opportunities. The successful conclusion of the negotiations on the chemical weapons Convention proves that the Conference on Disarmament possesses considerable vitality and potential. It needs to be supported and strengthened to ensure its improved role. To this end, the Chinese delegation will work even closer with all other delegations and make further contributions.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of China for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Ireland, Ambassador Swift.

Mr. SWIFT (Ireland): Mr. President, since this is the first occasion in this session on which my delegation has spoken in the Conference, may I offer you my congratulations on your assumption of your important office? I am confident that at a particularly important time for the Conference on Disarmament your skill and experience will make a valuable contribution to its work. I should also like to extend my compliments to the Secretary-General of the Conference,

Ambassador Berasategui, whose experience and guidance are more than ever an asset in the Conference's work.

There is general agreement among speakers so far in this session that with the conclusion of the negotiations for the chemical weapons Convention, the Conference on Disarmament has entered a new phase. The conclusion of the CWC was an event on which the Conference rightly congratulated itself. Now that it has been completed, the Conference is turning its attention to other issues. It is in our view important that it should make early progress on a number of items which merit special attention, if the credibility which it has won as a result of the CWC negotiations is not to be gradually dissipated. As has been indicated earlier, my delegation regards a nuclear test ban, non-proliferation and transparency in armaments as being among the items CD should now treat as priorities.

This session will also be to a considerable extent a period of self-evaluation for the CD. Its agenda, composition and methods of work are being examined in the light of the new security situation in the world and of the new questions and challenges which confront the international community.

The successful negotiation of the chemical weapons Convention was made possible by the transformation of international security relations that has taken place in recent years. The end of the divisions of the cold war and the new cooperative approach to disarmament and international security questions create a new environment in which this Conference will operate in the future. This new environment has implications for the composition and agenda of the Conference. My delegation is convinced that an imaginative and forward-looking approach to both of these issues is required.

The chemical weapons Convention reflects the old and the new order of problems. It deals both with chemical weapons and facilities for their production and with the chemical industry worldwide. The counterpart of destruction of weapons and production facilities is a monitoring of industry and guarding against proliferation. Not many States possess or have produced chemical weapons. A much larger number of States produce or use the toxic chemicals which can go to make these weapons and which are listed in the schedules to the Convention. The provisions of the Convention which relate to monitoring the chemical industry are of concern to many countries - in fact, to every country with even a medium-size chemical industry.

(Mr. Swift, Ireland)

In another important area, the uncontrolled spread of conventional armaments is aggravating many regional and local conflicts and generating instability on a scale not seen for many years. The European Council has already expressed alarm at the stockpiling of conventional weapons in certain regions, and the EC member States have made clear their support for the United Nations Register of arms transfers. The CSCE Council of Ministers has also expressed concern about the

threat posed by excessive accumulation of conventional weapons. These situations point to what my delegation believes is a new dimension in dealing with issues of disarmament and arms control. Many of the issues which CD is now called on to address - non-proliferation and transparency in transfers, in particular - will of their very nature concern and involve a great number of countries. The desire so often expressed here that the chemical weapons Convention should quickly become a universal instrument does not, in the view of my delegation, simply give expression to something seen as politically desirable; what is involved is ensuring the ultimate effectiveness of the Convention itself by making its provisions on industry verification and transfers universally binding. The same concern will inevitably arise in relation to non-proliferation in other areas and in relation to arms transfers. The world economy operates more and more openly, and countries which do not have major military establishments or industries can have significant potential to be agents or accessories in proliferation.

The nature of many new issues confronting this Conference appears therefore to call for a generous approach to the question of CD's composition and to point to an enlargement which will be wider rather than more restricted. It seems clear that it is in this way that CD can best equip itself to deal in a fully satisfactory way with the important questions on its agenda.

My delegation is familiar with differing arguments put forward as to the scope of expansion. I should like to make only two comments. Firstly, it does not appear to us that the danger of lack of consensus, or of a veto holding up the work of this Conference, will increase proportionately in line with an increase in membership. The countries which have applied to date to join CD have demonstrated in various ways a commitment to disarmament. The danger to consensus in an enlarged CD will not in our view be significantly greater - if indeed it is greater at all - than at present. Secondly, arguments have been put forward about a need for balance in any expansion. We know that we live in a world radically changed from that of 10 or 20 years ago in terms of security and threats to security. It would not be logical or consistent with realities in the new situation, in our view, to insist on what the distinguished Under-Secretary of State of Finland called a mathematical balance in an expansion of membership.

As the countries here will be aware, Ireland has since the 1950s made a contribution to the disarmament debate in the United Nations and elsewhere. Our association with the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is well known. We are happy that the Treaty is achieving ever-widening acceptance, and we welcome in particular the recent accession of France and China. The 1995 NPT review and extension conference will be critically

(Mr. Swift, Ireland)

important for the future of the NPT. It is worth noting in this context that many of the issues that will affect the future of the Treaty are on the agenda of this Conference and the consideration given to them here can be expected to have a significant influence on the outcome of the 1995 conference. We believe that

an enlarged CD could make an important contribution to the success of that conference.

I should also like to draw attention to the proposal put forward by Ireland in the First Committee on the United Nations General Assembly last year for a code of conduct on arms transfers. We welcome the establishment of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and we hope that all States will submit their returns to the Register by the due date of 30 April. However, while transparency in armaments is very important, we believe that more far-reaching action is needed to prevent excessive accumulations of conventional weapons that can threaten regional and international stability and security.

We do not believe that the time is ripe for agreement on binding legal commitments on force levels and arms holdings. We do however believe that the dangers of the current situation would be greatly reduced if there were acceptance by arms producers and purchasers of a set of politically binding principles and criteria. The principles on which such a code could be based might include transparency in arms transfers, maintaining armed forces only at a level dictated by legitimate security needs, the exercise of responsibility and restraint in transfers, consultation with other States as appropriate and controlling the activities of arms dealers and suppliers. Criteria for transfers would have regard to the situation in purchasing countries and their commitment to respect international norms and standards. Appropriate mechanisms might be elaborated to enable States concerned by large accumulations of weapons by others to raise these concerns at the international level and ultimately with the Security Council. Models for action of this kind already exist. In our view the adoption of such a code would be a very valuable step towards averting situations where unmonitored accumulation of weapons leads to regional conflict. We hope that the proposal for a code will receive serious attention and we believe that it can be a useful element in the debate on this issue in CD or elsewhere.

In concluding, I should like to underline once again Ireland's interest in contributing actively and constructively to the process of disarmament. Our interest has been a consistent and focused one which goes back over many years. We applied for membership of CD in 1982. The time is now ripe in our view for a substantial enlargement of this Conference, in order to reflect the new international security situation and to make the CD capable of accommodating all States which have applied for membership and which have a real interest in contributing to its work. I can assure you, Mr. President, that Ireland is ready to make its contribution.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Ireland for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia, Her Excellency Wilma Zafra.

Mrs. ZAFRA (Colombia) (translated from Spanish): Mr. President, allow me to extend to you and through you to this honourable assembly my warmest greetings and my pleasure at finding myself here today.

The end of the cold war has opened up new prospects and renewed hopes in the area of disarmament. The recent agreements between the Russian Federation and the United States are an important step in the history of disarmament and although the risk of nuclear confrontation between the two super-Powers has lessened, it is also true that the risk of horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons is more manifest today than ever before and its use more possible in one or other of the conflict scenarios that have been highlighted by the end of the East-West confrontation. In other words, disarmament issues were not exclusive to the cold war and now have greater force than ever.

As the Secretary-General of the United Nations said in his report on "New dimensions of arms regulation and disarmament in the post-cold-war era" (A/C.1/47/7), disarmament and arms regulation go hand in hand with political and economic questions. We consider that the relationship between disarmament and development is a cornerstone of any effort to consolidate a new regime of international security. The new concept of security is not only military but also ethnic, economic, social and ecological, as was stated a few days ago to this very forum by Her Excellency Baroness Margaretha of Ugglas, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden. In this connection, any effort in the field of disarmament and arms control should be considered in a broadened context of international security.

Colombia has stated in a number of gatherings that there is a need to respect the competences of the various United Nations bodies. Under Article 11 of the Charter, it falls to the General Assembly to consider the principles governing disarmament and the regulation of armaments. We view with concern the recommendation that the Security Council should play a greater role in disarmament questions. Considering that some of the major arms producers in the world are members of the Security Council, we wonder whether it is feasible for the Council to be allowed greater interference in "disarmament matters, and in particular, the enforcement of non-proliferation" as suggested by the Secretary-General in his report. In the same way, the Conference on Disarmament should remain a negotiating body and the First Committee and the Disarmament Commission should retain their deliberative role. The report recommends a reassessment of the machinery of the Organization devoted to disarmament questions. Colombia considers that the framework laid down by the Final Document of the 1978 special session is still valid and appropriate. The problem is not a structural one but one of political will. We also view with concern the trend towards reducing the staff of the secretariat, which would have adverse repercussions on our work.

A few weeks ago we attended the ceremony for the signature of the Convention for the prohibition of chemical weapons in Paris. Colombia was one of the 130 countries that signed this international instrument and we are pleased with that. Following the arduous task of negotiating this Convention here in this forum,

some think that the Conference on Disarmament now has no agenda for its work. We are not of that opinion. Nuclear disarmament is a

(Mrs. Zafra, Colombia)

major task that still lies ahead of us. If agreements can be arrived at for the prohibition of biological weapons and chemical weapons, why cannot a convention be concluded for the prohibition of nuclear weapons? Within this context a first concrete and effective step could be a complete nuclear test ban. The present moratorium on nuclear testing by various countries that possess nuclear technology, we believe, provides a favourable opportunity. Thus the conclusion of an agreement on negative assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States would be desirable, without of course losing sight of the real objective of nuclear disarmament.

The subject of transparency in armaments is a subject of special interest to my country. Without overlooking the threat presented by nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, we think that the real threat to international peace and security is posed by conventional weapons. For several years now in other forums Colombia has addressed the problem of the continued trade in weapons that fuels and perpetuates regional conflicts and the illicit traffic in weapons that exacerbates phenomena such as terrorism, drug trafficking and subversion. In this context, we have promoted the consideration and treatment of the problems inherent in the stockpiling, transfers and production of and illicit traffic in conventional weapons, and we were the sponsors of resolution 43/75 I. Colombia participated in the group of 18 governmental experts that prepared the United Nations study on the transparency in international transfers of arms, which was called for by that resolution. The study points to the importance of transparency in the field of armaments in the context of the peaceful solution of conflicts and recommends that all States should attach high priority to the eradication of the illicit traffic in weapons and take action towards that end. The recommendations of this study were taken up in resolutions 46/36 L and 46/36 H, the first of which led to the addition of the subject of transparency in armaments to the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament.

The Register of arms transfers established in 1991 by the United Nations is a confidence-building measure that imposes no obligation whatsoever, except the moral obligation on the State that agrees to participate in this exercise. In the initial phase the Register will cover information on transfers of certain conventional weapons whose stockpiling and transfer might be considered dangerous for the maintenance of international peace and security. At a later stage that will start in 1994 a group of governmental experts will study the operation of the first phase of the Register and provide the necessary guidance for its expansion to include information on national production and weapons stocks in the arsenals of those countries that provide information. Although this will not eliminate illicit transfers of weapons, it could have a deterrent effect. The Register could provide an analytical basis to pursue the more ambitious phase of real verification and the establishment of an international code of conduct on arms transfers. Although we think that work on these subjects is of the greatest

interest, we must not lose sight of the fact that confidence-building measures such as transparency in the transfer of weapons is not a valid alternative to a focus on genuine and real disarmament.

(Mrs. Zafra, Colombia)

Allow me now, Sir, to refer to a burning issue in this chamber - the membership of the Conference on Disarmament. As many delegations have already said in this forum, the present membership of the Conference on Disarmament is a reflection of the cold war and therefore it is time to change it. Some of the members of this body are worried that a significant increase in the number of members would make the negotiations less effective and flexible. We are convinced that that view is incorrect. The negotiations on the Convention for the prohibition of chemical weapons lasted too many years without any significant progress being made, and only a change in political will among the main military Powers allowed the rapid conclusion of this Convention. Political will is the key to negotiations, not the number of participants. Allow me to give you an example: in the International Labour Organisation, not only delegations from practically all countries participate in the elaboration of conventions, but an equal number of representatives of workers and employers. This has not prevented them from adopting more than 170 conventions in 70 years of work. It would appear that there is greater convergence as to the ideals of labour than the ideals of peace. In this connection we consider that participation in the Conference on Disarmament should be open to all States that consider that they can make a contribution to the negotiations on disarmament and arms control. Certainly not all the delegations will participate in an equal fashion in all the ad hoc committees or working groups of this Conference.

Finally, Mr. President, allow me to refer to the fact that last week, on 24 February, my Government presented to the Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament a formal application to join the Conference on Disarmament as a full member. We hope that this application will be given a favourable reception and we reiterate to you and to this august assembly our desire to cooperate in subjects of such great importance for mankind.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia for her statement and for the kind words she addressed to us.

That concludes my list of speakers for today. Does any other representative wish to take the floor at this stage? This does not seem to be the case.

You will recall that, as agreed at the Presidential consultation held on 20 January, there will be no meetings of the Conference and its subsidiary bodies next week. The timetable that has been circulated today concerns the meetings to be held during the following week, between 15 and 19 March. As usual, the timetable is merely indicative and we might change it or add other meetings if necessary. In this connection, I hope that we will soon be able to appoint the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency in Armaments, so that this

subsidiary body may start its work without delay. If I hear no objection I shall consider that the Conference adopts the timetable.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I recognize the representative of Chile.

Mr. TIRONI (Chile) (translated from Spanish): First of all, since I am taking the floor for the first time in this meeting, I would like to congratulate you on your appointment to the post of President and offer you our full support and also take the opportunity to congratulate Ambassador Amorim, who has just concluded his term in the Chair. We would like to take the floor briefly to express our support for the remarks made by the delegation of Colombia, especially in this presentation on behalf of its Vice-Minister, and welcome the fact that we listened very carefully to those words and also those spoken by the distinguished Ambassador of the United States, Mr. Ledogar, as far as transparency in transfers in armaments is concerned. As you know, Chile fully supports this process of transparency and we are prepared to participate very actively in the work on this topic. We think that the American proposal has very valuable elements in it that should prompt us to give it detailed consideration, for instance the exchange of information here in this Conference, both between member States and non-member States of the Conference on Disarmament. Also on this matter, we favour all steps that lead to the strengthening of the Conference on Disarmament and these initiatives, like the one just indicated, as well as the promotion of meetings and seminars on the creation of a climate of confidence, are activities which will lead to this strengthening that we seek. Finally, I would also like to remind you of the intention and the aim declared by the Chilean authorities to hold meetings in my country during this year and next year on confidence-building measures to contribute to this process, and finally to say that, in the same way, we are prepared to cooperate and participate actively in the various meetings that have already been scheduled and the others that the Ambassador of the United States was so good as to propose.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Chile for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair.

Since this is the last plenary meeting for this year's session of the Conference on Disarmament under the presidency of Bulgaria, let me express to all delegations in this chamber our sincere appreciation for the cooperation and valuable support which they have so kindly accorded to us in discharging the duties of the presidency. The excellent start made by the Conference under the skilful leadership of Ambassador Amorim of Brazil has greatly facilitated our task.

I am pleased to note that the Conference on Disarmament has been able to draft and adopt two special reports representing the collective views of member

States on the United Nations Secretary-General's report "New dimensions of arms regulation and disarmament in the post-cold-war era", and on the status of the ongoing review of its agenda, composition and methods of work. We can find satisfaction in the fact that the Conference has fulfilled this urgent task in a spirit of cooperation and mutual understanding. This has made it possible to transmit, in time, these important reports for the attention of the resumed session of the First Committee.

I would like to thank the coordinators for their efforts and significant contribution to the work of the Conference.

(The President)

I could not fail to express my delegation's appreciation to the Secretary-General of the Conference and Personal Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General, Ambassador Berasategui, whose assistance and friendship have made it easier for us to fulfil our duties. My gratitude goes also to all the members of the secretariat, as well as to the interpreters, translators, documentation and conference services whose competence and dedication made our work more effective.

In conclusion, I would like to extend to the next president, Ambassador Shannon of Canada, my delegation's best wishes for success in the exercise of his mandate. We are sure that under his competent leadership the Conference will be able to carry out its work in the most efficient manner.

As envisaged in the timetable for this week, the Conference will hold an informal open-ended consultation on its improved and effective functioning, under the chairmanship of Ambassador Kamal of Pakistan in this conference room, immediately after this plenary meeting.

That concludes our work for today, and I now intend to adjourn this plenary meeting. The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Thursday, 18 March, at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 11.35 a.m.